Alberta Finance
Economic Bulletin

ECONOMIC STATISTICS RELEASED DURING THE WEEK OF May 7, 2001 TO May 11, 2001

	Reference Period	Month/Previous Month (m/m)	Month/Previous Year's Month (y/y)	Comments
Help Wanted Index (1996=100)	April			In April, the help-wanted index fell for seven provinces with the largest declines in New Brunswick (-4.5%), Manitoba (-2.9%), PEI (-2.8%) and British Columbia (-2.2%). The largest increases were in Alberta (4.0%) and Saskatchewan (2.1%). The help-wanted index for Canada remained unchanged from March 2001. Year over year, the index decreased for Canada (-1.2%), while Alberta bucked the trend with a 13.7% increase. The help-wanted index is a measure of firms' intentions to hire new workers rather than giving overtime to existing employees.
Alberta	183	4.0%	13.7%	
Canada	168	0.0%	-1.2%	
Year to date				
Alberta			13.8%	
Canada			1.0%	
Building Permits ($ millions)	March			In March, Canadian non-residential building permits declined for the second time in four months (-8.8%). Residential permits also declined (-13.5%). Despite this, Canadian building permits are up 9.9% in the first three months of 2001 compared to the first three months of 2000. This is the highest increase since 1990. Alberta building permits rose 19.7% from February, led by a 71.1% jump in non-residential permits. Permits in Calgary increased 3.2% over February to $187.7 million, while Edmonton was up 3.1% to $109.7 million.
Alberta	507.7	19.7%	8.8%	
Canada	3,081.4	-11.5%	-2.9%	
Year to Date				
Alberta			-3.5%	
Canada			9.9%	
United States Unemployment Rate (%)	April			Unemployment in the United States rose to 4.5%, up from 4.3% in March, as the number of payroll employed positions fell by 223,000. Overall, the number of unemployed persons increased 300,000 to 6.4 million. The U.S. unemployment rate is at its highest level since November 1998. However, average weekly earnings increased 0.4% over March 2001 and it is important to remember that unemployment is considered a lagging indicator of economic performance.
	4.5%	0.2%	0.5%	